

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5750
INFO USMISSION USBERLIN
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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 BONN 03041

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV PFOR PINT WB US GW
SUBJECT: BERLIN AND INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS

BEGIN SUMMARY: ON FEBRUARY 17, STATE MINISTER WISCHNEW-
SKI, WHO IS INTER ALIA RESPONSIBLE FOR BERLIN AND INNER-
GERMAN AFFAIRS IN THE FEDERAL CHANCELLERY, AND I DIS-
CUSSED THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN BERLIN AND THE GDR,
AS WELL AS THE CURRENT STATE OF INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS.

ACCORDING TO WISCHNEWSKI, THE EAST GERMANS' CONCERNS
ABOUT CONTROL OVER THEIR OWN POPULATION LED THEM TO TAKE
CERTAIN ACTIONS WHICH AFFECT THE FRG AND BERLIN. THE
EAST GERMAN REGIME WANTS TO LIMIT CONTACT BETWEEN EAST
AND WEST GERMANS, REDUCE THE FUNCTIONS OF THE FRG
PERMANENT REPRESENTATION IN EAST BERLIN, AND CONTROL
ACCESS TO THE FRG MISSION.

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WISCHNEWSKI SAID THE SOVIETS HAD TURNED DOWN THE
GDR REQUEST TO PERMIT DIRECT ELECTIONS OF EAST BERLIN
DEPUTIES TO THE "VOLKSKAMMER"; THE REMOVAL OF CONTROL
POINTS BETWEEN EAST BERLIN AND THE GDR MIGHT HAVE
REPRESENTED A TRADE-OFF FOR THE RUSSIAN REFUSAL TO
PERMIT A CHANGE IN ELECTION PROCEDURES.

WISCHNEWSKI HAD LITTLE TO SAY ABOUT THE FUTURE STATE OF INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS BUT DEVOTED CONSIDERABLE TIME TO DISCUSSING THE WEST BERLIN SITUATION. HE SAID THAT PRIVATE INVESTMENT SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED, RATHER THAN INCREASES IN THE FEDERAL PRESENCE. WAYS SHOULD BE SOUGHT TO IMPROVE THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CLIMATE IN WEST BERLIN WITHOUT SEEKING UNNECESSARY CONFRONTATION WITH THE SOVIETS. TO MY SURPRISE, WISCHNEWSKI STRESSED IN THIS CONNECTION THAT IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO ATTEMPT TO FORCE BERLIN'S INCLUSION IN THE EUROPEAN PASSPORT SYSTEM WHEN IT WAS ADOPTED BY THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY. IT WAS VERY IMPORTANT, HOWEVER, THAT BERLIN BE INCLUDED IN EC-SOVIET NEGOTIATIONS ON FISHERIES AND EC-COMECON TRADE NEGOTIATIONS.

WISCHNEWSKI WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION IN WEST BERLIN. DESPITE PUBLIC STATEMENTS TO THE CONTRARY, HE SAID THAT IT WAS UNCERTAIN WHETHER GOVERNING MAYOR SCHUETZ WOULD REMAIN IN OFFICE.

I CONCLUDED OUR DISCUSSION ON BERLIN WITH THE COMMENT THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO HAVE PERIODIC CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN THE THREE ALLIED AMBASSADORS AND WISCHNEWSKI ON BERLIN MATTERS. HE SAID HE ALWAYS WELCOMED MEETING WITH THE ALLIED AMBASSADORS AND REMARKED THAT ALL RESPONSIBLE PARTIES SHOULD GIVE SERIOUS THOUGHT TO WHAT COULD BE DONE TO HELP BERLIN. END
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SUMMARY.

1. DURING MY FEBRUARY 17 CALL ON STATE MINISTER WISCHNEWSKI AT THE FEDERAL CHANCELLERY, HE PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN BERLIN AND THE GDR AS WELL AS THE STATE OF INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS.

2. WISCHNEWSKI MEETS WEEKLY WITH STATE SECRETARY GAUS, THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE GDR. THEY HAD THEIR LAST MEETING ON FEBRUARY 16. ACCORDING TO THE LATEST INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO THE FRG, THE EAST GERMAN GOVERNMENT IS HAVING PROBLEMS WITH POLITICAL CONTROL AT HOME. THE EAST GERMAN REGIME IS WORRIED THAT A SITUATION MIGHT DEVELOP IN THE GDR SIMILAR TO WHAT HAS EMERGED IN POLAND AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA. THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION AND THE REGIME'S ACTIONS TO COPE WITH THESE PROBLEMS HAVE HAD THE FOLLOWING CONSEQUENCES FOR INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS:

(A) LIMITING CONTACTS --

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INFO USMISSION USBERLIN
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THE EAST GERMAN REGIME WANTS TO REDUCE THE
DEGREE OF CONTACT BETWEEN FRG AND GDR CITIZENS (E.G.,
ENGAGED COUPLES WHOM THE GOVERNMENT FEARS WILL
EVENTUALLY MARRY AND SEEK TO LEAVE THE GDR). LAST YEAR
THERE WERE 8,000,000 VISITS BY WEST GERMANS TO EAST
BERLIN AND THE GDR, AND AS NINETY PERCENT OF THESE
VISITORS WERE CRITICAL OF THE GDR GOVERNMENT, IT IS
UNDERSTANDABLE THAT THE MAGNITUDE OF WEST GERMAN VISITS
MAKES THE EAST GERMAN REGIME NERVOUS.

(B) LIMITATIONS ON THE FUNCTIONS OF THE FRG
PERMANENT REPRESENTATION (PERMREP) IN EAST
BERLIN --

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IN THE PAST THE PERMREP WOULD INTERVENE WITH THE EAST GERMAN AUTHORITIES IN SOME CASES WHERE EAST GERMANS WERE REFUSED PERMISSION TO VISIT THE FRG. ALTHOUGH IT IS NOT PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE, THE GDR AUTHORITIES NO LONGER WILL PERMIT PERMREP OFFICIALS TO RAISE SUCH ISSUES WITH THE EAST GERMAN AUTHORITIES.

(C) CONTROL OF ACCESS TO THE PERMREP --

IT IS NOT CLEAR IF THE CONTROLS ON ACCESS TO THE FRG PERMREP IN EAST BERLIN PUT INTO EFFECT IN JANUARY WERE AGREED TO BEFOREHAND BY THE SOVIETS. ON JANUARY 11 UNIFORMED POLICEMEN CHECKED VISITORS ENTERING THE PERMREP BUILDING. SINCE THEN THE PROCEDURE IS FOR GDR POLICE TO CHECK EAST GERMAN VISITORS AFTER THEY HAVE VISITED THE PERMREP. THERE HAS NOT AS YET BEEN ANY EVIDENCE THAT THE GDR AUTHORITIES HAVE TAKEN ANY PUNITIVE ACTION AGAINST EAST GERMANS WHO HAVE VISITED THE FRG PERMREP.

THE FIRST REACTION BY EAST GERMAN CITIZENS TO THE POLICE CONTROLS AT THE PERMREP BUILDING, WHICH WERE VIEWED BY MILLIONS OF EAST GERMANS ON WEST GERMAN TELEVISION, WAS TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF VISITORS. ON ONE DAY THERE WERE OVER 100 EAST GERMAN VISITORS TO THE PERMREP. BY MID-FEBRUARY, HOWEVER, THE FLOW OF VISITORS HAD RETURNED TO THE RATE WHICH WAS NORMAL BEFORE THE POLICE CONTROLS BEGAN. THERE ARE NOW BETWEEN FIFTY AND SIXTY EAST GERMAN VISITORS PER DAY, AND SINCE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PERMREP THERE HAVE BEEN OVER 10,000 EAST GERMAN VISITORS.

3. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WILL REJECT THE EAST GERMAN CRITICISM OF THE PERMREP ACTIVITIES WHEN IT REPLIES TO THE GDR AIDE MEMOIRE OF JANUARY 27. IT IS IMPORTANT, HOWEVER, THAT THE PERMREP OPERATE IN A "CORRECT" MANNER
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AND NOT OPEN ITSELF UP TO THE CHARGE THAT IT WAS INTERFERING IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE GDR. THE PERMREP WILL MAKE SOME MINOR CHANGES IN PROCEDURE TO AVOID DIFFICULTIES. FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE PAST EAST GERMAN VISITORS FILLED OUT A QUESTIONNAIRE WHEN THEY VISITED THE PERMREP. NOW THERE IS NO LONGER A QUESTIONNAIRE AND PERTINENT INFORMATION WILL BE RECORDED AS NECESSARY.

4. THERE WAS A DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN THE EAST GERMAN GOVERNMENT AND THE SOVIETS ABOUT THE PROCEDURE FOR ELECTING EAST BERLIN DEPUTIES TO THE "VOLKSKAMMER." THE SOVIETS REFUSED TO PERMIT THE DIRECT ELECTION OF EAST BERLIN DEPUTIES DESPITE A REQUEST BY THE EAST GERMANS. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE REMOVAL OF CONTROL POINTS ON THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN EAST BERLIN AND THE GDR WAS A TRADE-OFF FOR THE SOVIET REFUSAL TO PERMIT DIRECT ELECTION OF EAST BERLIN DEPUTIES. THE CESSATION OF THE PUBLICATION OF THE "VERORDNUNGSBLATT" IS A MURKIER CASE. THE FIRST INFORMATION ABOUT THE CESSATION CAME VIA HUNGARIAN SOURCES AND THE BACKGROUND OF THE DECISION IS STILL NOT CLEAR.

5. THE FUTURE STATE OF INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS --

TRADE BETWEEN THE GDR AND FRG IS NOW ALMOST IN BALANCE. THE BERLIN-HELMSTEDT AUTOBAHN IMPROVEMENT PROJECT IS GOING WELL. THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE BUILDING OF A NEW HAMBURG-BERLIN AUTOBAHN WILL TAKE SOME TIME. IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO WORK OUT AGREEMENTS WITH LOWER SAXONY AND SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN ABOUT THE ROUTE ON THE WEST GERMAN SIDE. IN ADDITION THE HELMSTEDT AUTOBAHN PROJECT IS UTILIZING FULLY EAST GERMAN ROAD CONSTRUCTION CAPACITY.

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6. THE BERLIN SITUATION --

WISCHNEWSKI IS IN FAVOR OF ENCOURAGING PRIVATE INVESTMENT TO HELP THE CITY RATHER THAN CONCENTRATING ON SYMBOLIC INCREASES IN THE FEDERAL PRESENCE. THE 27,500 FEDERAL EMPLOYEES IN WEST BERLIN ARE PROBABLY ENOUGH AND IT WOULD BE MORE HELPFUL FOR BERLIN TO FIND WAYS OF ATTRACTING NEW INDUSTRIES WHICH PAY TAXES. AT THE SAME TIME, BONN MUST INSURE THAT FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES IN WEST BERLIN DO THEIR PART TO BOOST THE CITY'S ECONOMY. FOR EXAMPLE, WISCHNEWSKI RECENTLY VISITED THE FEDERAL PRINTING PLANT IN BERLIN AND SINCE RETURNING TO BONN HAS WRITTEN TO ALL FEDERAL MINISTRIES (WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE DEFENSE MINISTRY) REQUESTING CONFIDENTIAL

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THAT THEY LOOK INTO WAYS TO INCREASE UTILIZATION OF THIS BERLIN FACILITY.

CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT HAS ASKED WISCHNEWSKI TO LOOK INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF HOLDING A MAJOR INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL FESTIVAL IN BERLIN. THE POINT IS THAT WAYS SHOULD BE FOUND TO HELP SECURE THE CITY'S FUTURE AND TO IMPROVE MORALE RATHER THAN SIMPLY SEEKING CONFRONTATION WITH THE SOVIETS AND EAST GERMANS.

A CASE IN POINT IS THE QUESTION OF A COMMON PASSPORT FOR ALL CITIZENS WITHIN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY. IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO FORCE A CONFRONTATION WITH THE SOVIETS ON WHETHER BERLINERS SHOULD HAVE SUCH A PASSPORT. IT WOULD BE MORE USEFUL TO INSIST THAT BERLIN BE INCLUDED IN EC-SOVIET NEGOTIATIONS ON FISHING RIGHTS IN EC WATERS AND INCLUDED IN THE EC-COMECON TRADE NEGOTIATIONS. (COMMENT: THIS IS THE FIRST INDICATION WE HAVE HAD THAT ANYONE IN THE FRG IS CONSIDERING THE OMISSION OF BERLINERS FROM THE EUROPEAN PASSPORT SYSTEM.)

7. THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION IN BERLIN --

IT WAS UNCERTAIN WHETHER GOVERNING MAYOR SCHUETZ WOULD REMAIN IN OFFICE. LAST WEEK IT LOOKED AS IF

HE WOULD RESIGN,
BUT SCHMIDT AND OTHERS CONVINCED HIM NOT TO RESIGN.
HE WILL HAVE TO MAKE A DECISION SOON BECAUSE OF THE
1979 ELECTIONS IN WEST BERLIN. IF SOMEONE ELSE IS TO BE
THE CANDIDATE, HE MUST TAKE OVER THE REIGNS OF GOVERN-
MENT SOON OR HE WILL HAVE LITTLE CHANCE OF BEING ELECTED
IN 1979.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SITUATION IN WEST BERLIN IS
COMPLETELY DIFFERENT THAN IT WAS IN THE YEARS OF THE
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EAST-WEST CONFRONTATION, AND A BELEAGUERED ISLAND
MENTALITY HAS INFECTED EVERYONE THERE. ONE MUST BE
CAREFUL ABOUT PUBLIC CRITICISM OF THE BERLIN SITUATION
BECAUSE CRITICAL REMARKS FRIGHTENED OFF INVESTMENT AND
MADE THE SITUATION WORSE.

8. THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BUNDESTAG FOREIGN AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE, SCHROEDER, WHOSE OPINION WISCHNEWSKI VALUES
HIGHLY, SAID THAT THREE OUTSTANDING TREATIES WITH THE
SOVIET UNION, WHICH ARE HUNG UP ON THE INCLUSION OF
BERLIN, SHOULD BE READY FOR SIGNATURE IF BREZHNEV IS
TO MAKE A VISIT TO BONN. HOWEVER, WISCHNEWSKI FEELS

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THAT THE SOVIETS ARE NOT READY TO SIGN THESE TREATIES
AT THE PRESENT TIME.

9. WHEN WE CONCLUDED OUR DISCUSSION OF BERLIN AND
INNER-GERMAN MATTERS. I TOLD THE STATE MINISTER THAT
ALTHOUGH WE WERE VERY SATISFIED WITH THE WORK OF THE
BONN GROUP, IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO HAVE PERIODIC CONSUL-
TATIONS BETWEEN THE THREE ALLIED AMBASSADORS AND
WISCHNEWSKI ON BERLIN MATTERS. HE REPLIED THAT BOTH HE
AND THE FEDERAL CHANCELLOR ALSO PLACED A HIGH VALUE ON
THE WORK OF THE BONN GROUP AND THAT ANY RUMOR THAT THEY
IN ANY WAY WERE UNHAPPY WITH THE BONN GROUP WAS
SIMPLY NOT TRUE. AT THE SAME TIME, HE SAID HE WELCOMED
THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS BERLIN WITH THE ALLIED
AMBASSADORS AND THAT ALL THE RESPONSIBLE PARTIES SHOULD
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GIVE SERIOUS THOUGHT TO WHAT COULD BE DONE TO HELP
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